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AUTHOR Pollock, John S.
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ABSTRACT

A study evaluated the effectiveness of the 1996-97 Reading Recovery program as implemented in the Columbus, Ohio, public schools. The program featured individualized one-on-one lessons provided by 58 specially trained teachers serving 470 grade 1 pupils. The treatment group consisted of the 230 pupils who were either discontinued (202) or received 60 or more lessons but not discontinued (28). Results indicated that (1) of the 230 treatment group pupils, 217 (94.3%) displayed over time each of the 3 strategic processing behaviors (monitoring reading, constructing meaning, and integrating sources of information); (2) of the 202 pupils who were discontinued from the Reading Recovery program, 197 had available scores from a benchmark reading assessment administered to all grade 1 pupils in the district, and of those, 173 (87.8%) passed the assessment; (3) of the 28 pupils who were not discontinued but received at least 60 lessons, 24 had available benchmark scores, and of those, 9 (37.5%) passed the benchmark; (4) of the treatment group of 230 pupils, 219 (95.2%) read 5 or more books at text reading level 8 or above (criterion was 75.0%); (5) a total of 1,639 parent contacts were made with program teachers, and average of 3.5 contacts for each pupil served; and (6) the 230 treatment group pupils represented 48.9% of the 470 pupils served, but represented 58.4% of the total number of contacts made with parents or guardians. Findings support continuation of the program with attention given to seven recommendations. (Contains eight figures of data.) (RS)

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Elementary and Secondary Education Act - Title I

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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
1996-97

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TITLE I
READING RECOVERY PROGRAM

Written by:

John S. Pollock,
Professional Specialist

Data Analysis by:

Kathy Morgan,
Professional Specialist

Columbus (Ohio) Public Schools
Department of Evaluation Services
Kurt T. Taube, Ph. D.
Director

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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
TITLE I
READING RECOVERY™ PROGRAM
1996-97

Executive Summary

Program Description: During 1996-97, the Reading Recovery program served 470 grade 1 pupils. The program was a joint effort of educators in the Columbus Public Schools, the College of Education of The Ohio State University, and the Ohio Department of Education, and was funded by Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) - Title I monies.

The purpose of the Reading Recovery program was to provide early intervention to underachieving first grade pupils who appeared unlikely to learn to read successfully without additional reading instruction. The program featured individualized one-on-one lessons provided by specially trained teachers. The lessons were based on observational tasks designed to provide a comprehensive assessment of the pupil's development of reading and writing strategies. During 1996-97, 58 teachers served pupils in 38 schools. Each teacher served an average of 8.1 pupils.

Time Interval: For evaluation purposes, the program started on September 23, 1996 and continued through May 9, 1997. Pupils included in the final analyses for Desired Outcomes 1 and 2 must have either been successfully discontinued (completed) from the program regardless of the number of lessons received or have received 60 or more instructional lessons but were not discontinued. Many of those pupils who received fewer than 60 lessons but were not discontinued either moved to another school during the year where Reading Recovery service was not available or began the program so late in the school year that it was not possible for them to receive 60 lessons.

Activities: To help pupils develop reading strategies, daily 30-minute individualized lessons included a variety of instructional activities such as reading and re-reading books while the teacher recorded pupil strategies and errors, writing and reading pupil stories, letter identification, and sound analysis of words.

Evaluation Design: The evaluation design included two desired outcomes: (1) at least 75 percent of the pupils who had received 60 or more lessons or who were discontinued would display at least twice throughout the treatment period each of three reading strategic processing behaviors (monitoring reading, constructing meaning, and integrating sources of information) and (2) at least 75 percent of pupils who received 60 or more lessons or who were discontinued would read at least five books at text reading level 8 or above. In addition to the two desired outcomes, parent involvement data were also collected by program teachers. Locally constructed instruments were used to collect enrollment/attendance and parent involvement data.

Major Findings: The Reading Recovery program served 470 pupils in 1996-97, with average pupil enrollment (days scheduled) of 57.3 days. Average pupil attendance (days served) was 49.8 days and the average number of instructional lessons was 39.5. The average number of instructional lessons is less than the average number of days served due to the fact that pupils spend the first ten days of service "roaming around the known." These days are not counted as lessons. The treatment group consisted of the 230 pupils (48.9% of those served) who were either discontinued (202) or received 60 or more lessons but not discontinued (28). Program developers have estimated that most pupils need approximately 60 lessons to complete the program. The number of lessons pupils received ranged from zero to 103.

The two desired outcomes for the 1996-97 Reading Recovery program were met. Of the 230 treatment group pupils, 217 (94.3%) displayed over time each of the three reading strategic processing behaviors (criterion was 75.0%). Of the 230 treatment group pupils, 219 (95.2%) read five or more books at text reading level 8 or above (criterion was 75.0%).

In April, 1997, a benchmark reading assessment was administered to all grade one pupils in the district. Pupils received either a passing score (Yes) or a non-passing score (No) on the benchmark assessment. A passing or non-passing score was determined by the pupil's classroom teacher using a modified miscue analysis as the pupil read a designated text. Of the 202 pupils who were discontinued from the Reading Recovery program, 197 had available benchmark scores. Of these 197 pupils, 173 (87.8%) passed the benchmark assessment. Of the 28 pupils who were not discontinued but received at least 60 lessons, 24 had available benchmark scores. Of these 24 pupils, 9 (37.5%) passed the benchmark assessment. This difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 37.27$, $p<.01$, one-tailed). Of the remaining 240 pupils served by the Reading Recovery program but who received less than 60 lessons, benchmark scores were available for 218. Of these 218 pupils, 42 (19.3%) passed the benchmark assessment.

Records of parent contacts and activities maintained by program teachers for the 470 pupils served indicated a total of 1639 parent contacts were made with program teachers, an average of 3.5 contacts for each pupil served. The 230 treatment group pupils represented 48.9% of the 470 pupils served, but represented 58.4% (957) of the total number of contacts made with parents or guardians.

Recommendations

The Reading Recovery program has been continued during the 1997-98 school year, and it is recommended that it continue. With that in mind, the following recommendations are presented:

1. The process by which pupils with less than 60 lessons are transferred from the Reading Recovery program to the Early Literacy program needs to be closely monitored. During 1996-97, 48.9% (230) of the 470 pupils served were included in the treatment group. The small percentage of pupils included in the treatment group is partly related to transferring pupils from Reading Recovery to Early Literacy before the pupils received 60 lessons, which is the number of lessons needed to be included in the treatment group. If pupils are making progress in literacy acquisition, program teachers should make every effort to continue to serve them beyond 60 lessons.

2. Efforts should continue for exploring ways to minimize the amount of time needed to collect data on pupils served. Much teacher frustration exists because of the volume of record keeping required for the program. Teachers maintain records for both Columbus Public Schools and The Ohio State University College of Education. If both institutions used the same set of data, reporting by both institutions would be consistent and the amount of paperwork required of teachers reduced.

3. As increased parent involvement is regarded as one of the indicators of effective schools, every effort must be undertaken to promote parental involvement in the program, especially in the areas of planning, operation, and evaluation.

4. The earliest possible identification of pupils needing special education instruction should be emphasized. Pupils with special needs can be better served by teachers with expertise in specific special education areas. Reading Recovery is not a special education program. If pupils with special education are not identified early, they remain in the Reading Recovery program too long, creating frustration for both pupils and teachers.

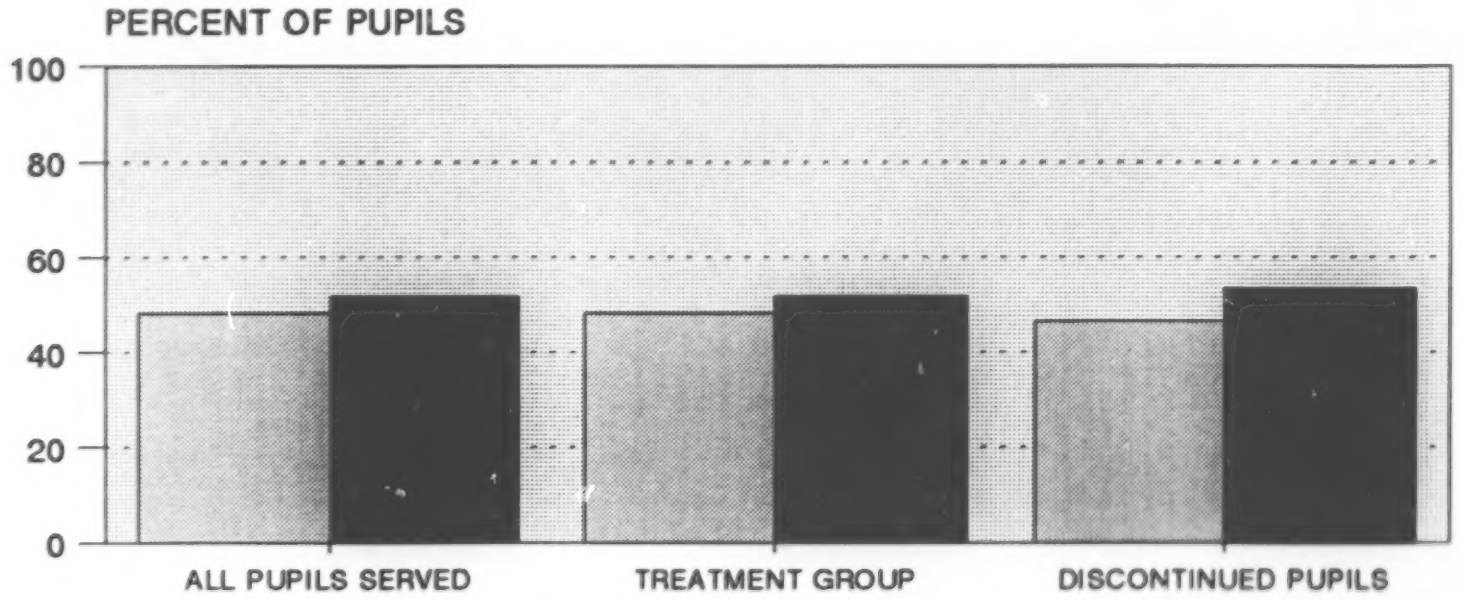
5. The instructional strategies and techniques used by program teachers need to be shared with and enhanced by the regular classroom teacher. The instruction provided by the program teacher and by the regular classroom teacher must complement each other. The academic achievement of pupils will suffer if they receive mixed messages in their reading and writing instruction. Opportunities must be made available for program teachers and regular classroom teachers to develop a consistent whole language based approach to instruction.

6. Inservice meetings should be continued to provide program teachers the opportunity to enhance their instructional intervention skills, to share instructional ideas with one another, and to clarify any concerns or misconceptions they may have about the total Reading Recovery program.

7. An on-going process of site visitations by the program evaluator needs to be continued. These visits provide invaluable information for the program evaluator in the areas of content and instruction and provide program teachers the opportunity to clarify questions they may have about evaluation requirements and record keeping. These visitations also help build a rapport between the program teacher and program evaluator.

READING RECOVERY PROGRAM 1996-97

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF PUPILS SERVED BY GENDER



	ALL PUPILS SERVED	TREATMENT GROUP	DISCONTINUED PUPILS
FEMALES	227	111	94
% FEMALES	48.3	48.3	46.5
MALES	243	119	108
% MALES	51.7	51.7	53.5
TOTALS	470	230	202

FIGURE 1

Treatment group includes pupils who received 60 or more lessons or who were discontinued.

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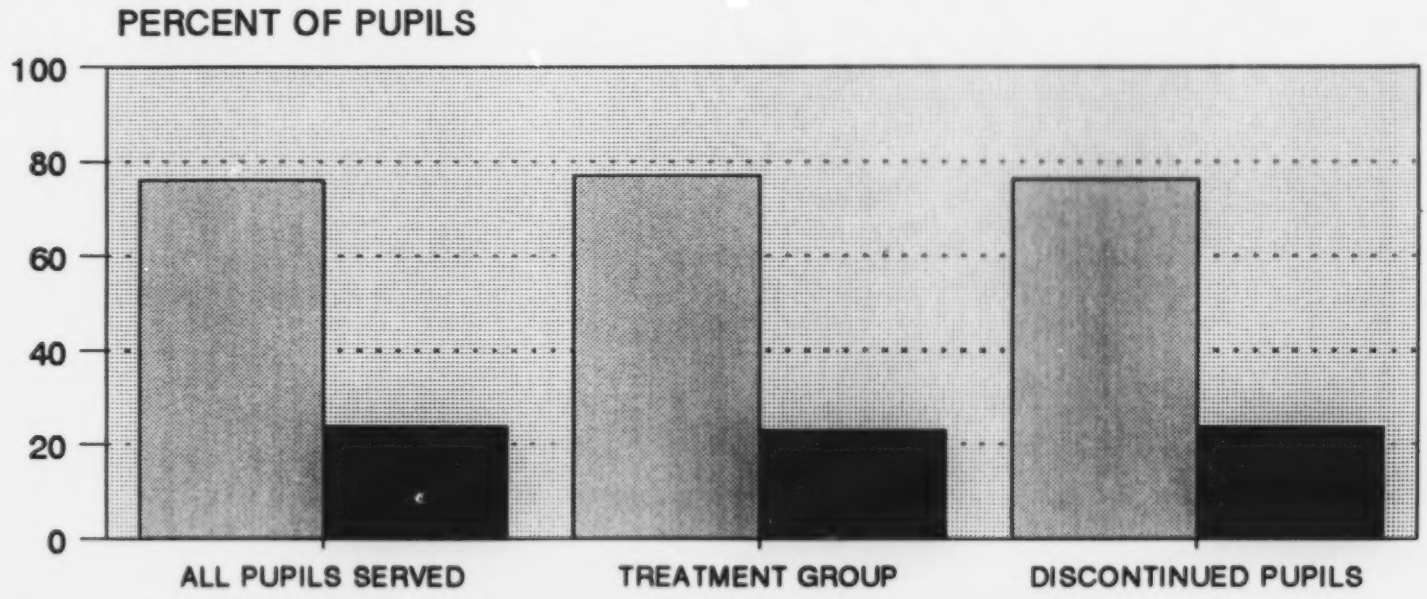
READING RECOVERY PROGRAM 1996-97

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF PUPILS SERVED BY RACE



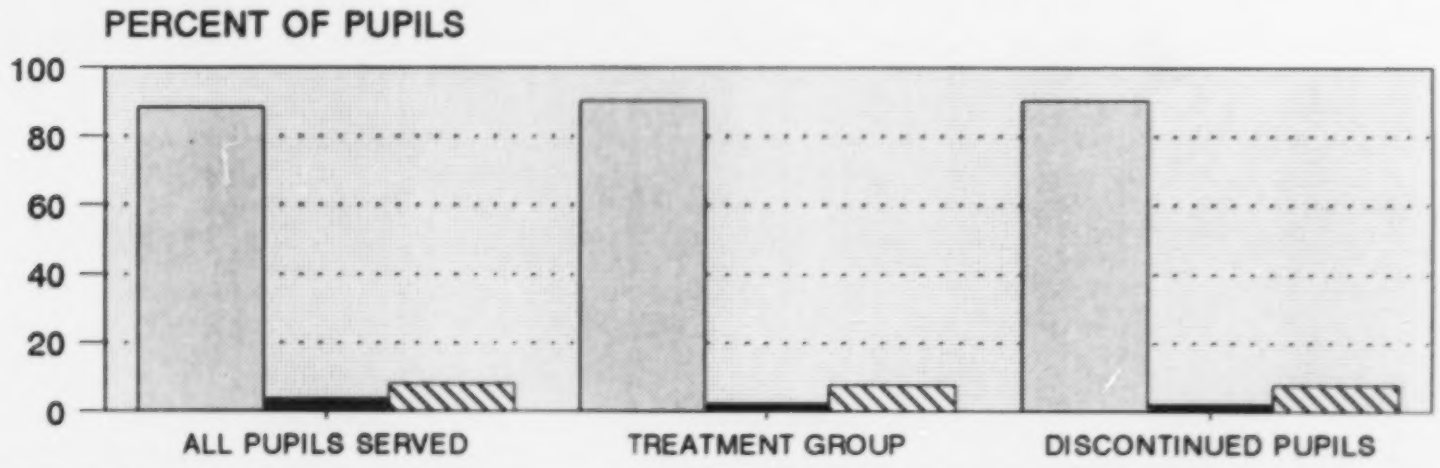
	ALL PUPILS SERVED	TREATMENT GROUP	DISCONTINUED PUPILS
BLACK	357	177	154
% BLACK	76	77	76.2
NONBLACK	113	53	48
% NONBLACK	24	23	23.8
TOTALS	470	230	202

FIGURE 2

Nonblack includes Asian, Hispanic, Native American and White pupils.
Treatment group includes pupils who received 60 or more lessons or who were discontinued.

READING RECOVERY PROGRAM 1996-97

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF PUPILS SERVED BY FREE OR REDUCED PRICE LUNCH STATUS



	ALL PUPILS SERVED	TREATMENT GROUP	DISCONTINUED PUPILS
FREE	416	208	183
% FREE	88.5	90.4	90.6
REDUCED	17	5	4
% REDUCED	3.6	2.2	2
PAYING	37	17	15
% PAYING	7.9	7.4	7.4
TOTALS	470	230	202

FIGURE 3

Treatment group includes pupils who received 60 or more lessons or who were discontinued.

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READING RECOVERY PROGRAM 1996-97

ALL PUPILS SERVED BY DISCONTINUED STATUS

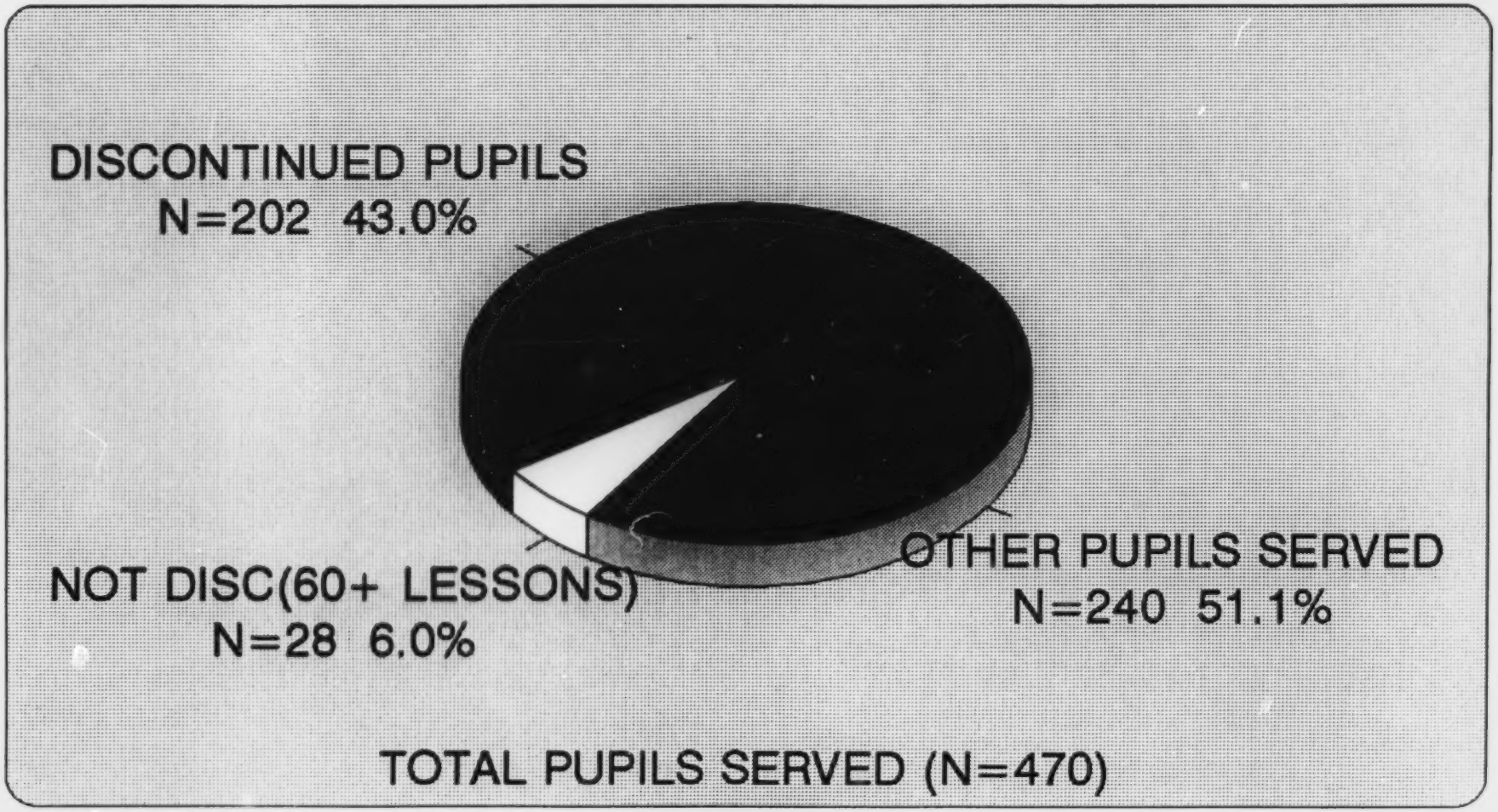


FIGURE 4

The 202 discontinued pupils plus the 28 not discontinued pupils with 60 or more lessons comprise the treatment group.

READING RECOVERY PROGRAM 1996-97

NUMBER OF LESSONS RECEIVED BY DISCONTINUED PUPILS AND OTHER PUPILS SERVED

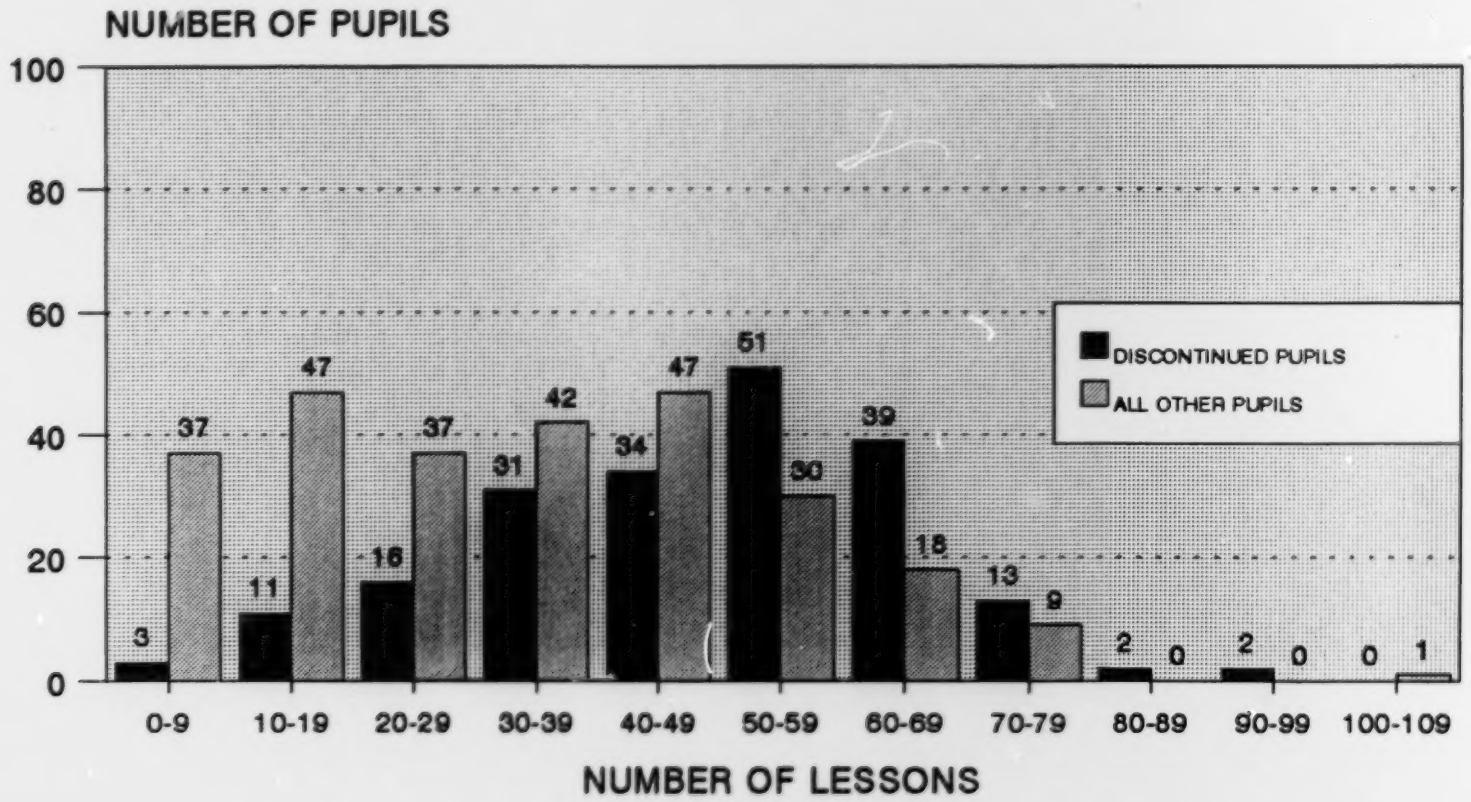


FIGURE 5

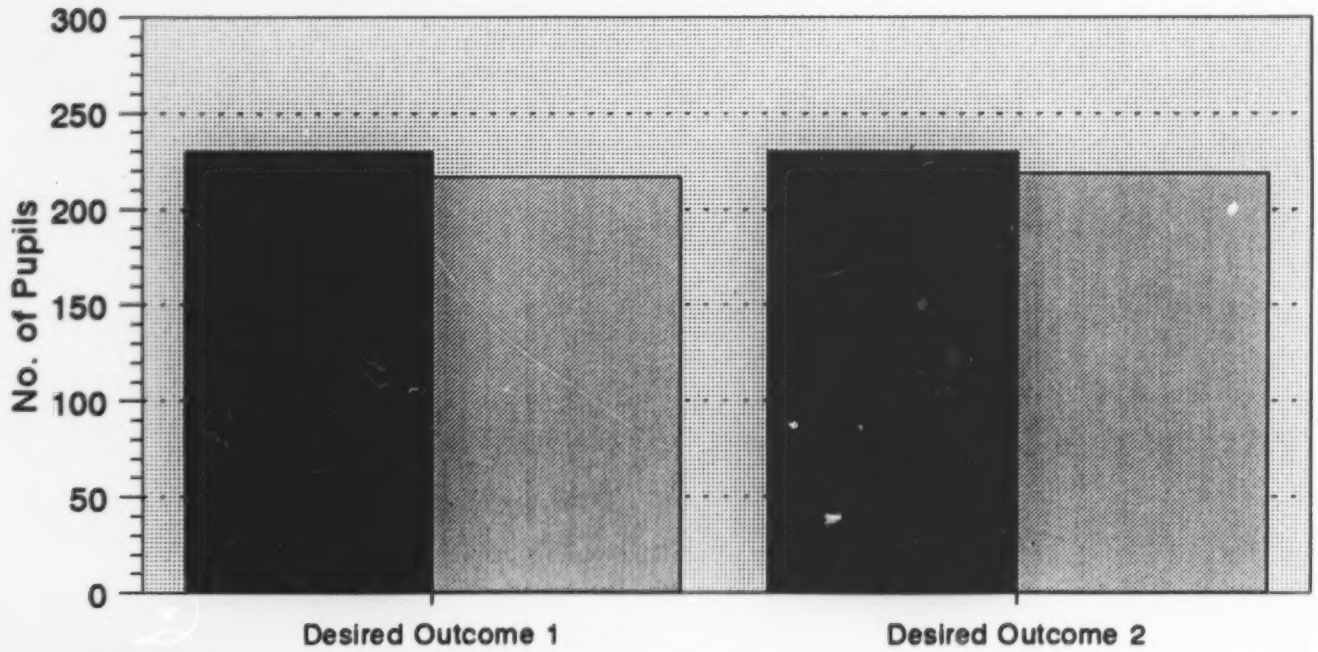
The 202 discontinued pupils plus the 28 other pupils with 60 or more lessons comprise the the treatment group.

Reading Recovery Program
Desired Outcome Results

- Desired Outcome 1: At least 75 percent of the pupils who had received 60 or more lessons or who were discontinued will display evidence of each strategic processing behavior at least twice during the treatment period when reading appropriate instructional text to the satisfaction of the Title I teacher.
- Desired Outcome 2: At least 75 percent of the pupils who had received 60 or more lessons or who were discontinued will read at least five books at text reading level 8 or above as certified by the Title I teacher.
- The following chart and table (Figure 6) present the analyses of the number and percent of treatment group pupils who met the performance criterion for Desired Outcomes 1 and 2. The chart and table indicate the number of pupils in each treatment group, the number of pupils meeting the performance criterion, and the percent of pupils meeting the performance criterion for each desired outcome.
- Summary statements for pupils served in the Reading Recovery program:
  - > Of the 470 pupils served, 230 (48.9%) met one of the criteria for inclusion in the treatment group for Desired Outcomes 1 and 2.
  - > Of the 230 treatment group pupils, 217 (94.3%) met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 1, indicating the desired outcome was achieved.
  - > Of the 230 pupils who met a criterion to be included in the treatment group, 219 (95.2%) met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 2, indicating the desired outcome was achieved.
  - > Of the 202 discontinued pupils, 198 (98.0%) successfully achieved Desired Outcome 1 and 199 (98.5%) successfully achieved Desired Outcome 2.

READING RECOVERY PROGRAM 1996-97

Desired Outcomes 1 and 2
Number and Percent of Treatment Group Pupils Who Met Criterion



	Desired Outcome 1	Desired Outcome 2
No. in Treatment Group	230	230
No. Meeting Criterion	217	219
% Meeting Criterion	94.3	95.2

FIGURE 6

Elementary and Secondary Education Act - Title I

Final Evaluation Report

1996-97

Reading Recovery Program
Benchmark Assessment Results

- A benchmark reading assessment was administered to all grade one pupils in the district in April, 1997. Pupils received either a passing score (Yes) or a non-passing score (No) on the benchmark assessment. A passing or non-passing score was determined by the pupil's classroom teacher using a modified miscue analysis as the pupil read a designated text.

- The following charts and tables (Figures 7 and 8) present the analyses of the number and percent of various subgroups of pupils who were successful with the benchmark assessment. The charts and tables indicate the number of pupils in each subgroup, the number of pupils who were successful, and the percent of pupils who were successful.

- Summary statements for pupils served in the Reading Recovery program:

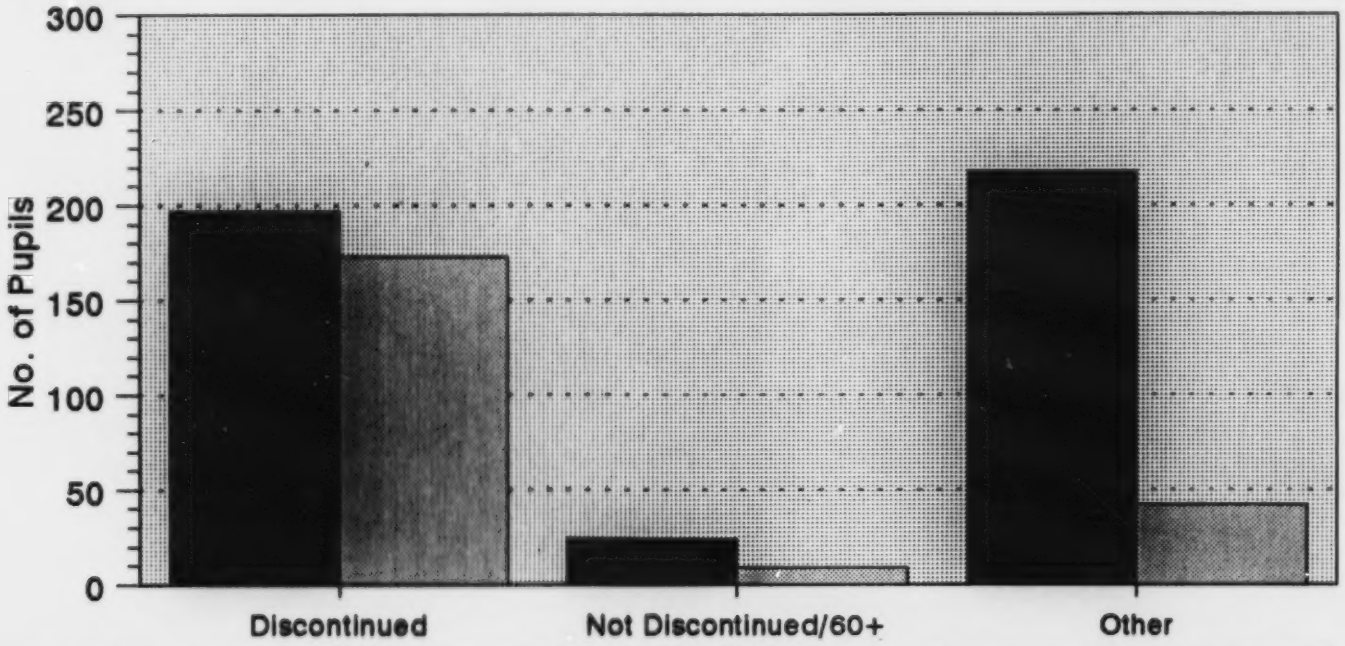
  > Of the 197 discontinued pupils with available benchmark scores, 173 (87.8%) passed the benchmark assessment.

  > Of the 24 not discontinued pupils with 60 or more lessons with available benchmark scores, 9 (37.5%) passed the benchmark assessment.

  > Of the 218 pupils who were not discontinued and who had fewer than 60 lessons, 42 (19.3%) passed the benchmark assessment.

READING RECOVERY PROGRAM 1996-97

Benchmark Reading Assessment
Number of Successful Pupils by Discontinued Status



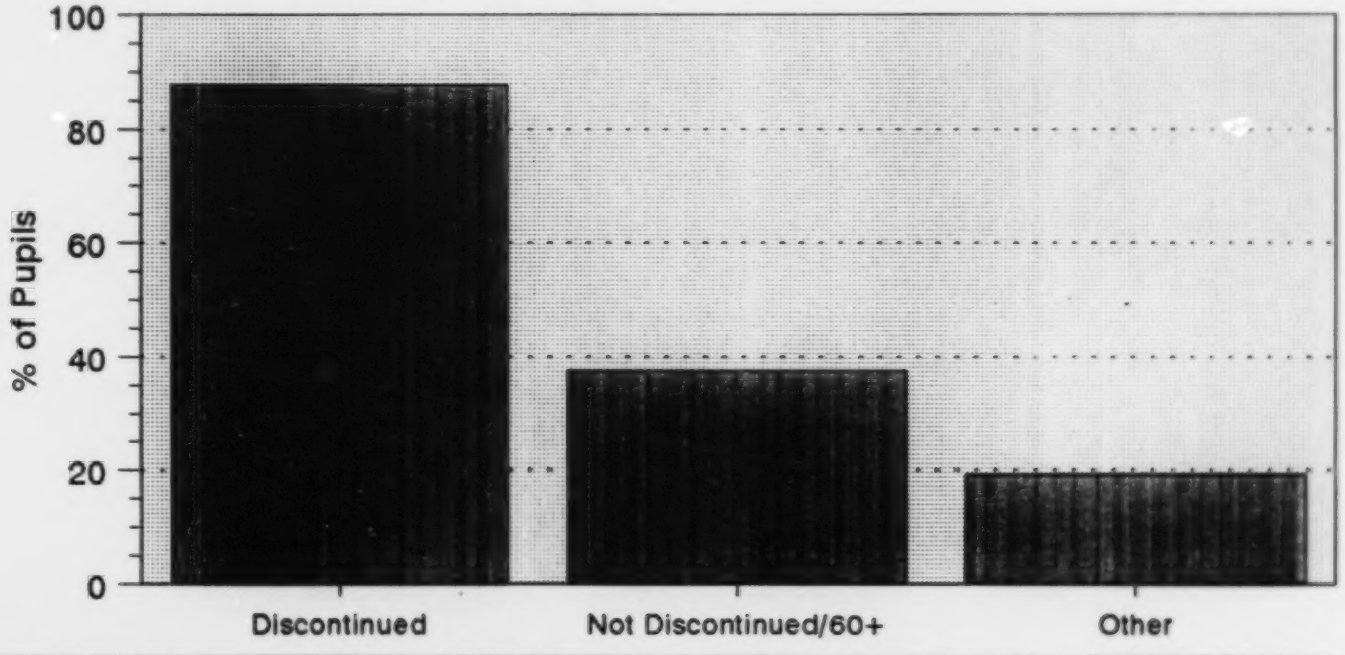
	Discontinued	Not Discontinued/60+	Other
No. in Subgroup	197	24	218
No. Meeting Criterion	173	9	42
% Meeting Criterion	87.8	37.5	19.3

FIGURE 7

Discontinued(Discontinued Pupils/Any Number of Lessons; Not Discontinued/60+(Not Discontinued Pupils with 60 or More Lessons; Other (Pupils Served Who Were Not Discontinued with Less than 60 Lessons).

READING RECOVERY PROGRAM 1996-97

Benchmark Reading Assessment
Percent of Successful Pupils by Discontinued Status



	Discontinued	Not Discontinued/60+	Other
No. in Subgroup	197	24	218
No. Meeting Criterion	173	9	42
% Meeting Criterion	87.8	37.5	19.3

FIGURE 8

Discontinued(Discontinued Pupils/Any Number of Lessons; Not Discontinued/60+(Not Discontinued Pupils with 60 or More Lessons; Other (Pupils Served Who Were Not Discontinued with Less than 60 Lessons).